

Classification:

Ownership: Public-Federal

Category: Building

Number of Resources: 2

Buildings: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0

Structures: Contributing 0, Noncontributing 0

Sites: Contributing 0, Noncontributing 1

Multiple Property Documentation Form: Swedish Properties of Baileytown,
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

Historic Function: Domestic

Current Function: Vacant

Description:

Architectural Classification: Folk

Materials: Foundation-Concrete, Walls-Log, frame, Roof-asphalt

[Note: In the legal records and the government census records, the Linden family name is recorded in at least four different ways: Lindeen, Lundein, Lenden and Linden. For purposes of clarity, the twentieth century spelling of the name Linden will be utilized throughout this document.]

The Linden house is a distinctive example of folk architecture that has been altered over the years. The structure is a one story modified L-shaped building with a side gable roof and is currently covered with both lap and asphalt siding. It was originally constructed during the nineteenth century as a two room, hall and parlor log cabin. A frame addition constructed on the rear was most likely built in the early twentieth century. The house is now surrounded by trees and encroaching vegetation and is in poor condition although the original hall and parlor cabin appears to be sound; the frame addition on the rear of the building has suffered from the elements. The builder and construction date remain unknown but the skilled craftsmanship of the log construction, evident underneath the siding and in the loft, indicates the house was probably built by someone familiar with Scandinavian construction techniques (See Dr. Alanen's letter, Appendix A). The corner dovetail notching, the v-shaped channel on the bottom of the hand hewn logs, the use of a hardwood-oak-for the logs, indicates that the person(s) who built the structure had exceptional skill. The house rests on top of a sand dune approximately 200 yards south of Route 12 in Westchester Township; it is about 1/4 mile west of the intersection of Mineral Springs Road and Route 12. The

structure was relocated twice by the Linden family although each move carried the structure less than a 1/4 mile to a new location. Each time the building was moved, the house maintained its use as a residence for members of the family. It is hard to determine exactly when the first move took place but the second move occurred during the late 1930s, so the structure has been in situ for over sixty years. There are integrity issues pertaining to the application of asphalt siding during the 1940s and the building's deteriorated condition. Yet, the Linden cabin has integrity in terms of design, workmanship, feeling and association and has remained on the same site since ca. 1938.

Underneath the asphalt and lap siding, the ethnic origins of this hand hewn structure are quite evident. The dovetail notching precisely joins the corners and it looks as if the notching is a half dovetail notch but without removing the siding, it is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the notches. The V-shaped channel on the bottom of the hand hewn logs ensure a very tight fit between the logs, which is a traditional technique utilized by Nordic builders. The logs chosen for this hall and parlor cabin are oak and, due to its hardness, is extremely difficult for builders to shape and use. The oak roofing members are sawn and the roof sheathing measures between 11" to 12". The original cedar shingles are still noticeable from the loft although newer asphalt shingles actually cover the roof. On the two side walls, the log construction extends to the peak of the gables, which is another indicator of the builder's ethnic origins. The flooring in the loft is pine. The loft's double hung 1/1 windows were cut into the logs, after the cabin was constructed, perhaps around the turn of the century. The windows throughout the house are double hung 1/1.

The Linden family enlarged the house and upgraded its exterior possibly after it was first moved after the turn of the twentieth century. Historic photographs supplied by the family indicate that the logs were no longer visible and the exterior was clad with lap siding (See copies of historic photographs). A frame addition was placed at the rear of the building so the structure became L-shaped with a porch and stoop on either side of the addition. The frame addition is not nearly as well built as the original hall and parlor log cabin. A porch and a stoop were originally constructed on the east and west sides of the addition; later the porch was enclosed and enlarged when it was moved to the top of the dune. Three rooms were added to the structure with the addition and the enclosed porch. The addition's roof intersects the hall and parlor's side gable at the rear.

A basement was added to the structure when it was moved to the top of the dune, around 1938 or 1939; the basement walls consist of cast concrete blocks. The

structure had interior plumbing when it was located at the corner, but the plumbing no longer functioned after relocation. A single entry door now provides access to the basement where the log floor joists are evident; originally there were wood folding garage doors that provided access to the basement. The structure did not receive electricity until the mid-1940s when the Linden family wired the building themselves. Due to the challenge of heating the house, the Lindens added asphalt siding in the 1940s. Originally there were farm buildings that the family used as late as World War II including a barn, chicken coop and outhouse, but the family demolished the outbuildings during the 1950s. The application of lap and asphalt siding in some ways has helped to protect the original log construction. (Correspondence Olgie Lawson, March 17, 2002)

Landscape Assessment:

The entire Linden property landscape is currently engulfed by woodland. Any discernable spatial organization or pattern that may have once existed to identify this property as a residence and farm has been obliterated by the advancement of trees and undergrowth. The house, concrete sidewalk, two dilapidated dog houses, a section of wire fence, and a lone crock are the only visible extant landscape features. A huge oak tree adjacent to the house, once likely a distinct specimen standing alone in the yard, now is merely a part of the encroaching woods. A long driveway leads to the house from Route 12, but the drive is also largely taken over by succession. The house overlooks a deep ravine to the immediate west and south. A barn, chicken coop and privy once were features of the landscape but have long since disappeared.

The Linden property landscape retains a small number of features that hint at its historic character, but in general the overall integrity of the landscape has been greatly impaired by woodland succession and the loss of essential features. Removal of vegetation in an attempt to restore the historic spatial organization would open the area surrounding the house, but merely clearing vegetation would not necessarily restore the original articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that once defined the farm. In addition, with the loss of associated outbuildings, residential vegetation such as shrubs and flower plantings, views, and land use, the historic character of the property could not be restored. Based on the lack of the integral characteristics listed, and thus the loss of the property's historic character, the Linden property landscape does not retain sufficient integrity to be considered eligible as a contributing resource.

Applicable Criteria: C & D

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Criteria Consideration: B

Period of Significance: 1880-1945

Statement of Significance:

Peter Linden's cabin is a remnant of Baileytown's Swedish past with a direct link to Nordic builders. The Linden cabin meets National Register criteria C and D. As a rare survivor of an architectural type, the Linden log cabin is eligible for listing under National Register criterion C. The cabin is also eligible under criterion D; if the asphalt and lap siding were removed, information pertaining to log building techniques could be uncovered and compared to others in a much larger region. Additionally, further information about the construction techniques utilized in the earliest construction at Baileytown could be deduced. At one time log cabins were more common, but not numerous, in the area; historical photographs and local interviews indicate that there were a few cabins that survived until the National Lakeshore was established. But now log cabins are exceedingly rare and the Linden is the only one that remains in the area with the hall parlor form noticeable on the exterior. In Baileytown, log cabins traditionally were enlarged and covered with lap siding as soon as the owner could afford the renovation; covering logs with siding is a traditional activity for log cabin owners so the building has a more formal look and the siding helps protect the logs (Warren Roberts, 75). Unlike the Lindstrom log cabin, the form of the Linden hall and parlor cabin is still apparent even though siding was added. Since the cabin was relocated, National Register criteria consideration B is applicable. Although the cabin was removed from its original location by the Linden family, its continual reuse by the family as their main residence is part of their family history. The moves did not impact the architectural importance of the cabin. The period of significance (1880-1945) relates to the original occupation of the cabin by the Linden family and their use of the cabin until it was covered with asphalt siding and electrified around the second world war.

It is difficult to determine if a structure existed on the land before Peter Linden purchased the property from Rose Bailey Howe in 1880. Howe probably inherited the property from her Father, Joseph Bailly one of the first European settlers in the area. According to the 1876 plat map, there appears to be a structure located near the section line between sections 26 and 27 in Township 36 North, Range 6 West. Yet the evidence is inconclusive and the land transfer deeds do not specifically

mention any type of building. (*Combined Atlases of Porter County, Indiana*. Copy of deed, personal papers, Olgie Lawson)

There are several determinants that indicate that the cabin was constructed by a Nordic, perhaps Swedish, builder. Folk architecture experts such as Dr. Arnold Alanen regard the dovetail notching, the V-shaped channel on the underside of the logs, the use of logs all the way to the peak of the gable and the use of oak logs as strong indicators of the cabin's ethnic origins.

Historically, hall and parlor houses have their origins in medieval Europe and were a basic vernacular building form on both sides of the Atlantic. Frequently hall and parlor houses were the traditional residences constructed in America during a settlement period. These two room cabins have a larger room, the hall, utilized as a kitchen, work area, and informal gathering space while the smaller parlor was at times a bedroom, formal reception room or even guest chamber. The loft area was normally a family's sleeping area and was reached by stairs placed in a corner. (Glassie, 78)

Architectural scholarship indicates that immigrants from three European regions brought log building techniques to North America from: an area of South-Central Europe, the East-Central region of Poland, the Czech Republic and East Germany, and the Scandinavian region. Closely fitted horizontal logs are the type of construction tradition associated with the northern European region. A special metal tool was used to produce a long groove or channel on the bottom and tops of the logs to ensure a tight fit between the logs that precluded the use of chinking. (Noble, 121-122) Not all Scandinavian log structures have the v-shaped channel but both the Linden and Johnson/Nelson cabins of Baileytown do. The use of logs from the log plate all the way to the gable peak is another characteristic of Scandinavian construction found at the Linden cabin. The notching linking the corners may sometimes connote specific ethnic groups but the corner notching at the log buildings in Baileytown is not thoroughly exposed, so no conclusions may be drawn. It appears as if the Linden cabin has half-dovetail notching.

Some emigrants from Sweden were skilled log workers who left rural occupations such as farming and logging and brought those techniques to America. Industrialization did not occur rapidly in Sweden as it did in Great Britain and the United States. Most of the Swedish immigrants in the mid to late nineteenth century moved from rural areas and generally chose to live to in colder climates such as the upper Midwest.

General Baileytown Context

As home to one of the largest concentrations of Swedish-born immigrants in the state of Indiana, Baileytown attracted Swedes due to economic opportunities and inexpensive land. Porter, Lake and La Porte Counties in northwest Indiana were settled later than most regions of the Hoosier state due to the area's inaccessible nature; the great Kankakee Marsh blocked access from the south and there were no natural harbors to provide access along the Indiana coast of Lake Michigan to the north. Porter County's agricultural land was marginal, especially in the northern part of the county where Westchester Township is located, because of excess sand and water. Therefore, Porter County, and specifically Westchester Township, offered newly arrived immigrants such as the Swedes affordable land. Local brick yards and factories offered economic opportunities. Equally important was Baileytown's location only forty-five miles from Chicago, a large metropolitan center that was home to thousands of Swedish immigrants.

To serve the expanding region, Swedish businessmen established stores in Chesterton; oral tradition indicates that the majority of stores in town were Swedish enterprises by 1900. Architectural and landscape features such as the Svenska Skola, the Burstrom Cemetery, Augsburg Lutheran Church and cemetery in Porter document the ethnic heritage of the Baileytown vicinity. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Augsburg Church was referred to as the Baileytown Swedish church in local newspaper announcements. The Linden property is one of seven remaining Swedish-related extant sites located within the boundaries of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Remarkably, until recently some of the Swedish descendants still lived in the area.

For more information about the lives of Baileytown Swedes please consult the multiple property documentation form's historic context, "Baileytown Swedes: A Nineteenth Century Rural Enclave."

Linden and Lawson Family History

The following provides an historic overview of the Linden family and their cabin in Westchester Township. Historical information concerning the Linden family came from three different sources: legal records, government censuses and information from the Linden/Lawson family. Peter Linden was born in Sweden, circa 1822, and his wife Mary Melina Peterson was also born there just a few years later in 1828. They were married in 1852 and at some point immigrated to the United States. Genealogical research done by the Linden/Lawson family indicates that Peter Linden's six children were confirmed at the Swedish Lutheran Church of

Baileytown between the years of 1870 and 1885. (Olgie Lawson correspondence and research, 2002)

The 1870 agricultural census for Westchester Township, Porter County, Indiana, indicates that Peter Linden's farm had an estimated cash value of \$300. The 1870 census refers to another farm that Peter Linden worked, not the one that is being evaluated. Linden owned ten acres of improved land and ninety acres of unimproved land. These figures, which are relatively low for the area and time, suggest that Linden may have begun farming his land within the last five years. He owned a few livestock—two horses and three cows and produced 300 pounds of butter in 1869 along with ten tons of hay. According to the Westchester Township plat map of 1876, Peter Linden owned two non-adjacent pieces of property in the northeast corner of Section 27 and land elsewhere. (U.S. Bureau of Census, Ninth Federal Census of Agriculture, 1870, Indiana. *Combined Atlases of Porter County Indiana*, 1979.)

Peter Linden purchased the subject property in the Baileytown vicinity in the northeast corner of Section 27 in 1880 from Rose Bailey Howe, daughter of one of the first European settlers Joseph Bailey. When and exactly who constructed the cabin is unknown; there are Swedish carpenters as well as “house builders” listed in the 1880 population census for Westchester Township. (Tenth Federal Census of Population, 1880, Indiana.)

By 1880, Linden's financial situation had improved and the estimated value of his farm, including the land, fences and buildings, had increased to \$1500 according to the agricultural census. The following figures actually reflect his production for year 1879. Linden owned fifty acres of improved land, ten acres of woodland and forest, and thirty acres of unimproved land. The census suggests that he diversified his crop and raised Indian corn, rye, wheat, hay and potatoes although he only owned three horses. Details about the farm buildings that they used are unavailable. (Tenth Federal Census of Agriculture, 1880, Indiana.)

Local oral tradition indicates that Mrs. Linden was a very generous person and had a shelter constructed on their property for George Blagg, a troubled and seemingly homeless Civil War veteran who never recovered from his participation in the war. Blagg is a well known locally among the Swedish descendents of Baileytown as the ‘hermit of the dunes.’ In the last part of the twentieth century he has almost achieved celebrity status. In 1980, a headstone was placed on his grave in the Burstrom Cemetery by the Duneland Historical Society with boy scout troops assisting. (Margaret Larson, *Memories of Old Baileytown “Plus,”* 1998.)

Peter Linden had six children, some of whom were born in Sweden others in Chicago and Baileytown. Peter Linden died in 1899 and his land was divided between two sons, John August and William Linden; his son William inherited the farm. William Linden had no children. William's wife Nellie Peterson Linden, was Mrs. Chellberg's sister. William and Nellie Linden had no children. William was a farmer who rented land from other Swedish residents such as the Larsons on Howe Road. (Fritz Larson, 2001) Interaction among the Baileytown Swedes was common in work, religious and social activities.

Research indicates that the cabin was moved short distances twice by the Linden family, though those distances were quite small. Family oral histories correlate with plat maps and legal records to indicate that the Linden family owned each parcel of land each time the cabin was moved. The 1905 plat map of Westchester Township indicates a structure located on William Linden's property, in the NW corner of the NW corner of Section 26 on what would eventually become the southeast corner of the intersection of Mineral Springs Road and Route 12. Oral histories indicate that the cabin "started out being a two room log cabin located across the highway near the railroad tracks-then moved across the road prior to 1916." (Olgie Lawson, correspondence, 2002) During a telephone conversation, Olgie Lawson further elaborated on the original location of the cabin and indicated that the property became the pick-up station and parking lot for the South Shore Railroad for Baileytown, perhaps that explains the reason for the move. Long time resident Irene Nelson remembers the cabin's location at that intersection and said "there were several houses in that area." (Nelson, 5/16/00) Mrs. Nelson's family socialized with the Linden family and both families attended the Augburg Lutheran Church. Mrs. Nelson lived down the road about 3/4 of a mile from the Lindens.

William Linden invited his sister Ida Linden Lawson to share the house after his wife died. After his death in 1938, Ida Lawson had a life estate on the property and occupied the cabin with her son Bert and her grandchildren. The property was moved for the last time by Bert Lawson. In 1968, the property passed out of the Linden and Lawson families to the Jessie and Clay Watkins who owned the property until the National Park Service purchased it in 1971. Jessie Watkins continued to live there until 1996 when her reservation of use expired.

Illustrations:

The accompanying Dune Acres topographical map, site map and photographs augment the text and provide visual details of the Linden Cabin property.

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